

March 11th Judiciary Committee Public Hearing on Gun Bills

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary

My name is John Westlake, from Coventry. I request all Bills being introduced today be tabled.

I am a veteran of Operation Desert Storm, the First Gulf War, 1991. Our unit was involved in one of the deadliest battles of that war, ending with multiple casualties on both sides, including 2 US servicemen being killed and 14 wounded, by friendly fire. Once the commander was informed, he immediately ordered a tactical pause, to all allow out unit an opportunity to regain situational awareness.

I feel the State of Connecticut is at that point today concerning gun laws. We need a tactical pause. An unhealthy "we verses them" environment has been created since the Sandy Hook incident and Governor Malloy's subsequent midnight push to enact stiffer gun laws.

A tactical pause is needed in this regard. Any and all gun laws enacted since the Sandy Hook massacre should be individually, one by one, and the law abiding citizens of the state should be given the opportunity to weigh in on the topic. To not allow this process is unAmerican. The event is rare in this country. There was no immediate need to enact any new laws, as there was no immediate threat of another similar event to come.

Per the 2017 Annual Report of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Crimes Analysis Unit

Population of 3.5 million

CT's Crime index rate has dropped steadily from 2008 to 2017, which mirrors the country's rate.

[https://www.ct.gov/oca/lib/oca/12\\_Years\\_of\\_Child\\_Gun\\_Deaths\\_and\\_Injuries\\_in\\_Connecticut\\_Jan\\_2013\\_with\\_charts\\_in\\_publisher.pdf](https://www.ct.gov/oca/lib/oca/12_Years_of_Child_Gun_Deaths_and_Injuries_in_Connecticut_Jan_2013_with_charts_in_publisher.pdf)

That being said, enough time has passed to take a hard close look at the cause of the Sandy Hook massacre. What caused it to happen? How could it have been prevented?

With the release of reports from various agencies involved with the investigation, it is now very apparent the blame lands squarely with Nancy Lanza, the shooters mother. She refused to follow advise of many mental health specialists. Her biggest failure was to familiarize the shooter with firearms even after he was determined to have a violent thought process. She took that poor judgment a step further by keeping not one, but many firearms in the house. That proved to be her most serious misstep, resulting in not only her own death, but that of 20 very young children and six educators.

Quotes from Adam Lanza's 5<sup>th</sup> grade homework assignment, a short story titled: 'The Big Book of Granny':

*When they arrive at the daycare center, Dora sends Swiper the Raccoon inside to distract the children. Then Dora enters and says "Let's hurt children."*

Lanza was failed on so many levels. Ignoring this fact, and using gun laws as a distraction, is yet another failure.

A quote from Stephen Sedensky III State Attorneys' report:

".....While he depended on his mom, the report says, Lanza had no emotional connection to her. She once asked him if he'd feel bad if anything happened to her. "No," he replied."

Regards, John Westlake, Coventry